Referring now to FIGS. **14** and **15**, a subscriber can also send message having a voice mail format to non-subscribers by email, if the subscriber has an email account. In FIG. **14** at step **1410**, a subscriber **1502** sends an email **1504** with an attachment file **1506** and delivery information **1508** to a local server **1510** using the u-mail addressing convention discussed previously, e.g., "vmail@sf_cp.com", where the "vmail" portion **1512** indicates that the email should be transmitted to an intended recipient **1552** as a message having a voice mail format and where the "sf_cp" portion **1516** routes the email **1504** to a server in San Francisco.

The email **1504** may be sent through any suitable network that supports email messaging. To avoid over-complicating FIG. **15**, email **1504** is shown being transmitted via a LAN **1518** through a LAN interface **1520**.

It is presently contemplated that an incoming message **1522** having a voice message format **1524** and delivery information **1526** are sent as part of email **1504** to local server **1510**. More particularly, the incoming message **1522** is sent as within email attachment **1506** and includes a digitized audio message **1528** such as a WAV file. For example, digitized audio message **1528** may be recorded from the subscriber's messaging interface **1530** having a sound card or any device capable of recording a voice message as a digitized audio message. The use of attachment file **1506** to hold incoming message **1522** is not intended to be the only approach but is simply one approach for sending incoming message **1522**.

Besides the u-mail addressing convention for indicating a delivery format of voice mail, delivery information **1508** also includes destination address such as a destination phone number **1534** and the subscriber's password **1536**. Delivery information **1508** may be placed at the first line of email message **1504** although such an approach is not intended to limit the present invention in anyway.

At step **1412** where upon receipt of incoming message **1522** and delivery information **1508**, local server **1510** processes incoming message **1522** by validating the subscriber's identity. Validation includes checking the included password **1536** against the subscriber's email address.

At step **1414**, a routing program **1540** or equivalent device determines whether the destination address, e.g., a destination phone number **1534**, is within a local area **1542** supported by local server **1510**, or within a non-local area **1544** supported by a remote server **1536** by using a routing table **1546**.

If the local server **1510** determines that the destination phone number **1534** is within local area **1542**, step **1416** is performed. At step **1416**, local server **1510** extracts digitized audio message **1528** from attachment file **1506**, converts the digitized audio message **1528** into a message **1548** having a voice mail format **1550**, and delivers the message **1548** by calling the intended recipient using destination phone number **1534** which was sent as part of delivery information **1508**. If the call is answered, the server announces to the answering party that there is a message for the person with the recorded name, and prompts the answering party to listen to the message.

The message may be sent through any suitable network supporting telephone transmission such as a telephone network **1554** via telephone interface **1556**.

Otherwise, if the destination phone number **1534** is better served by remote server **1536**, i.e., within non-local area **1544**, step **1418** is performed. At step **1418**, local server **1510** transmits email **1504** having attachment file **1506** to remote server **1536**.

At step **1420** where upon receiving email **1504** having attachment file **1506**, remote server **1536** extracts digitized audio message **1528** from attachment file **1506**, converts it into a message **1552** having a voice mail format **1554**, and delivers it by calling the recipient **1556** using destination phone number **1534** which was sent as part of delivery information **1508**. If the call is answered, the server announces to the answering party that there is a message for the person with the recorded name, and prompts the answering party to listen to the message.

In an alternative embodiment of the present invention, each server within a group of servers may be configured to have the answering party enter a pass-code for identity. The pass-code is previously communicated by the subscriber to the recipient for security purposes.

Voice Message Presented Via Web Page

FIG. **16** is a schematic block diagram showing the operation of a voice message presented via web page messaging mode in a presently preferred embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **17** is a schematic block diagram illustrating the use of messaging servers during the operation of a voice presented as web page messaging mode in a presently preferred embodiment of the present invention.

Referring now to FIGS. **16** and **17**, a subscriber can also send a voice mail message to a non-subscriber using a web page or similar message format where the message is stored by a server and made accessible to a messaging interface such as a browser. At step **1610**, a subscriber **1702** initiates a request by calling a local server **1704**, logging in as a subscriber, providing delivery information **1706**, and recording an incoming message **1708** having a voice message format **1710**. The delivery information **1706** includes a destination address such as an email address **1712** of an intended recipient **1714**. The destination address is entered though a telephone keypad **1716** or similar device by using the keypad coding scheme described above.

At step **1612**, local server **1704** digitizes incoming message **1708** having voice message format **1710**, resulting in a digitized audio message **1718**.

At step **1614**, a presentation program **1720** or equivalent converts digitized audio message **1718** to a delivery format by storing digitized audio message **1718** in a memory location such as a subscriber's mailbox **1722** within a subscriber mailbox database **1724**. For example, the presentation program **1720** creates a web page **1726** that includes digitized audio message **1718**, and stores the web page **1726** in subscriber's mailbox **1722**.

At step **1616**, a notification program **1728** creates a pointer **1730** to the memory location and a notification message **1732** having the intended recipient's email address **1712**. The notification message **1732** may take the form of an email message. The notification program **1728** obtains email address **1712** from delivery information **1706**.

In the presently preferred embodiment of the present invention, the pointer **1730** is a universal resource locator (URL) that points to a message included in a web page **1726**. The URL is included within an HTML file which is included with notification message **1732** as an attachment file **1734**. This permits an intended recipient to access the message such as digitized audio message **1718**, presented in web page **1726** simply by launching the attachment file **1734** with a messaging interface such as a computer having a web browser **1736**. Web page **1726** is configured to present the recipient with options for controlling access to digitized audio message **1718** over a suitable network such as the Internet so long as the messaging interface can support the accessing of digitized audio. This provides a subscriber the convenience of sending a voice message to anyone who has an email account and access to the Web through a web browser.